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RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0904
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3360
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0101
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0591
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1587
RUEHJA/AMCONSUL SURABAYA 1844
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 001925

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EAP/MTS FOR JWAYMAN; H FOR KAREN GATZ

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ID](#) [XB](#)

SUBJECT: REP. FALEOMAVAEGA BRINGS PAPUANS TOGETHER

REF: A. JAKARTA 1874

[¶](#)B. JAKARTA 1266
[¶](#)C. JAKARTA 852

JAKARTA 00001925 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Political Counselor Joseph L. Novak, reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶](#)1. (C) Summary: Despite being denied access to Papua during his July 3-6 visit to Indonesia, Rep. Eni Faleomavaega nevertheless succeeded in bringing together senior Papuan officials and civil society leaders in Jakarta for a dialogue on finding common ground to address the region's long-term needs. Faleomavaega built goodwill with GOI officials (Reftel A) and also a degree of unanimity among Papuans. Faleomavaega emphasized his confidence in President Yudhoyono's commitment to empower the Papuan people. He asked Papuans to speak with one voice in their dialogue with the GOI. According to Papuans who participated in the meetings, this was the first time that senior Papuan political leaders have sat down to hear the views of civil society leaders. End Summary.

[¶](#)2. (SBU) Rep. Eni Faleomavaega held a series of meetings with Papuan government and civil society leaders during his July 3-6 visit to Jakarta, holding dialogues with a cross section of Papuan society despite being denied access to Papua by the GOI. (see reftel A). The GOI kept its promise to bring Papuan officials to Jakarta instead, flying in governors from both Papua and West Papua provinces, several regents, and members of the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP). Minister of Fisheries Freddy Numberi arranged many of Faleomavaega's meetings, accompanied him throughout most of the visit, and coordinated events with the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Other senior Papuan officials and legislators attended many of the meetings as well, including: Deputy Minister for Development of Disadvantaged Regions, Dr. Michael Menafandu, and three members of Parliament: Theo Sambuaga (chairman of Commission One, which oversees foreign and security affairs), Yorrys Raweyai, and Robert Joppy Kardinal.

[¶](#)3. (SBU) Faleomavaega's marathon meetings culminated on July 5 with a session attended by all the Papuans mentioned above plus others who had flown in from Papua, including: Papuan Governor Barnabas Suebu and West Papua Governor Abraham Ataruri; several Papuan regents (locality administrator); and

a number of Papuan human rights leaders and members of the Papuan Traditional Council. Pro-separatists attended as well, including Council Secretary Willy Mandowen. Mandowen experienced some problems getting to Jakarta. His plane reservation for the trip had been canceled when he arrived at the airport in Papua, but his threat to stage a protest that would close the airport persuaded the airline to give him back his seat. Five MRP and Council members, however, were not able to travel because their seats were canceled, including Council Secretary General Thaha Al Hamid. (Note: They sent us a letter of complaint to pass to Faleomavaega, which we also passed to Foreign Ministry and Coordinating Security Ministry officials.) Various senior security and foreign ministry officials also attended the July 5 meeting.

Governor Laments Poverty, Praises SBY

¶4. (C) Gov. Suebu set the tone of the mid-day meeting by talking about the exploitation of natural resources which has stranded Papuans in extreme poverty amid vast natural wealth. He explained how the Special Autonomy Law of 2001 should have empowered Papuans, but instead has been stymied by "corruption and nepotism." He described how he "cried" at the poverty he witnessed during recent visits to some of Papua's thousands of villages. However, he noted that the situation has begun to change under President Yudhoyono with the implementation of Special Autonomy. He said he is hopeful that the Presidential Decree issued a few weeks ago will speed up development. The governor said he has four goals: clean government; people-centered, village-to-city infrastructure development; peace in Papua by ridding of the more than 10,000 outlanders who are illegally mining and deforesting under the noses of local officials, thus angering Papuans; and, transportation infrastructure development, to build an integrated air, land and sea transport system, requiring an investment of \$10 billion. He also said he plans to send qualified

JAKARTA 00001925 002.2 OF 003

teachers to all of the villages and to distribute \$100 million (Rp.10 trillion) to the villages over the next five years to lift Papuans from "absolute poverty to middle class prosperity."

Faleomavaega on Special Autonomy

¶5. (SBU) Faleomavaega spoke next, explaining his long kinship with Papua and how he is the first Congressman of Asian-Pacific heritage to chair the East Asia subcommittee. He explained that the statements he made previously about Papua were misconstrued as advocating separatism, noting that what he actually said was that if the GOI "is not going to do anything to help the people of Papua, you might as well give them independence." He then said, "I have come away very impressed with efforts by President Yudhoyono to implement the Special Autonomy Law." He said the more Papuans are empowered to run their own affairs, the "less power there will be for separatists who demand independence." He added that at least 10 delegations of Papuans have visited his office over the years, all claiming to represent Papua but with different agendas. "It is critical that you speak with one voice," he said.

¶6. (SBU) West Papua Governor Ataruri told the audience that the provincial government is now asking how it can undertake Special Autonomy in an integrated Indonesia, referring to Faleomavaega's earlier statement by adding that if this cannot be accomplished, "we should just be let go." Other participants in the meeting then launched into a litany of grievances, although no one openly spoke out for independence. (Note: Foreign ministry and security ministry officials observed this meeting.)

Papuans Find Common Ground

¶7. (C) Late on July 5, just ten or so persons attended a

smaller private follow-on meeting attended only by Papuans and Faleomavaega. According to one Papuan, these included: the two governors, Minister Numberi, Willy Mandowen, Yorrys Raweyai, Robert Kardinal, and Frans Wospakrik of the MRP. Raweyai and Mandowen said the five-hour heart-to-heart dialogue was the first time that senior Papuan officials have ever sat down and listened to community leaders. Views ranged from calls for immediate separation to the two governors' view of giving the remaining 19-year lifespan of Special Autonomy a chance to empower Papuans, Raweyai said. (Note: Raweyai advocates early independence.) Even the staunch pro-separatist Mandowen said the meeting swayed him to accept that, at least for the time being, Papuans need to work with the GOI to build the human capacity needed to govern themselves. Raweyai said the main message that everyone agreed on was that dialogue between government and civic leaders must continue and that they must speak with one voice in pressing the GOI to implement Special Autonomy. Raweyai and Mandowen both said they hope that the U.S. Congress and the Embassy will press the GOI to speed up Special Autonomy and to listen seriously to Papuans.

¶8. (C) A senior aid to Gov. Suebu, Agus Sumule, also asked us to keep pressing the GOI on these issues. In a July 11 telephone conversation, Sumule said the governor hopes Faleomavaega's visit "will result in an improved situation where the people in Jakarta will start to trust the people in Papua." He added, "I hope that Jakarta will understand now that Special Autonomy is being watched very carefully...by people outside." Sumule said the provincial government could have easily handled any political complications that might have arisen from Faleomavaega's visiting Papua, and he worried that Faleomavaega might believe that he did not see the real situation because he could not visit. Sumule also complained that halfway through the fiscal year, Papua has only received a third of the funds allocated under Special Empowerment, making planning very difficult, and that Papua is awaiting action on the Presidential Decree.

Flag Incident Raises Tensions

¶9. (C) When Faleomavaega arrived in Jakarta on July 3, approximately 500 delegates from 250 tribes had already gathered in Jayapura for the Papuan Traditional Council. The Council reportedly was very excited that Faleomavaega would arrive on July 4 and address them, not knowing permission was

JAKARTA 00001925 003.2 OF 003

denied. On July 5, the "Morning Star" flag, a symbol of Papuan independence, was displayed during a cultural performance at the Council, prompting Mobile Brigade police to send truckloads of police to the venue at the sports stadium. An aid to Governor Suebu called Poloff at that point, saying he was worried security forces might do something rash and asking the Embassy to urge GOI security officials to use restraint. Council leaders reached a compromise with police allowing them access to the stadium venue, but not to the room where delegates were meeting, thereby defusing the situation.

¶10. (C) On July 7, police summoned eleven Council members in order to question them as "witnesses" to the flag event, and were able to locate and question eight of them. According to Sumule, during the week of July 8, police were to have also questioned eight members of the cultural group that displayed the flag, with treason charges possible. The Council has long maintained that the Morning Star is a symbol of Papuan culture which they have a right to choose under the 2001 Special Autonomy Law. The GOI has declared the Morning Star a symbol of rebellion. Sumule also maintained that the Morning Star is a legal cultural symbol, and asked the Embassy to urge the GOI to not overreact. Sumule also expressed concern over comments on July 7 by former head of National Intelligence AM Hendropriyono, who said at a conference on separatist movements that the Papuan separatist movement is now "seeking sponsors from overseas." Several

other public figures made similar allegations in recent days.

¶11. (SBU) The Council on July 6 elected a new head, Forkorus Yoboisembut, replacing Tom Beanal. According to the media, Yobiosembut promptly called for Papuan independence, saying that the "forced autonomy that is underway should not stop West Papua's independence (Note: Separatists refer to the two Papuan provinces of Papua and West Papua, as West Papua.)

¶12. (SBU) Faleomavaega told interlocutors during his visit that he hopes to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali next December and to go to Papua at that time, receiving positive feedback from GOI officials (Reftel A). We also are planning to send PolOffs and probably other Mission officers to Papua several times in the coming months to review progress on Special Autonomy and human rights. We will continue to press for open and transparent access to Papua. USG focus on progress in Papua should help heighten GOI political will to stand by its commitments.

HUME